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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mrs. Mónica MARTÍNEZ (Ecuador)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 19 September 1997, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item at its 3rd to 6th, 14th, 16th, 18th, 24th and 28th meetings, on 13, 14, 17, 24, 27 and 28 October and on 3 and 6 November 1997. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/52/SR.3-6, 14, 16, 18, 24 and 28).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of the Family (A/52/57-E/1997/4);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (A/52/60-E/1997/6);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General and of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the implementation process of the education for all objectives (A/52/183-E/1997/74);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the operational framework for the International Year of Older Persons, 1999 (A/52/328);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/52/351);

(g) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the final report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development on monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/52/56);

(h) Letter dated 21 February 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the second session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System (A/52/80-E/1997/14);

(i) Letter dated 23 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the communiqué of the twenty-eighth South Pacific Forum (A/52/413).

4. At the 3rd meeting, on 13 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department for Economic and Social Affairs made introductory statements (see A/C.3/52/SR.3).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2 and amendments thereto contained in document A/C.3/52/L.10

5. By its resolution 1997/18, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Older Persons: towards a society for all ages" (A/C.3/52/L.2).

6. At the 14th meeting, on 24 October, the representative of Germany, on behalf of the Dominican Republic, Germany and Spain, introduced amendments (A/C.3/52/L.10) to draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2, by which:

(a) A new paragraph 17 would be added, reading:

"Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General entitled 'Operational framework for the International Year of Older Persons, 1999' (A/52/328)";

(b) A new paragraph 18 would be added, reading:

"Welcomes the initiative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the American Association of Retired Persons to collaborate on a Worldwide Poster Competition for the Year, in which artists will portray their vision of 'A Society for All Ages'".

7. At the 16th meeting, on 27 October, the Committee adopted the amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2, contained in document A/C.3/52/L.10, without a vote.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.2, as amended, without a vote (see para. 25, draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.3

9. By its resolution 1997/21, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the International Year of the Family" (A/C.3/52/L.3).

10. At the 16th meeting, on 27 October, the Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote (see para. 25, draft resolution II).

C. Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.12

11. At the 14th meeting, on 24 October, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of Canada, Costa Rica, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Sweden and Turkey, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century" (A/C.3/52/L.12). Subsequently, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Monaco, the Netherlands and San Marino joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

12. At the 18th meeting, on 28 October, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the sponsors, orally revised the draft resolution by inserting, in operative paragraph 8, the words "concerned non-governmental organizations" after the words "Invites Governments".

13. Subsequently, Algeria, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Finland, Guinea, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain and Ukraine joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

14. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.12, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 25, draft resolution III).

D. Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.13

15. At the 14th meeting, on 24 October, the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Austria, Bangladesh, Chile, Costa

Rica, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Honduras, Kenya, Luxembourg, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, Turkey and Uruguay, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Policies and programmes involving youth" (A/C.3/52/L.13). Subsequently, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, San Marino, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Sweden joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

16. In introducing the draft resolution, the representative of the Netherlands orally revised it as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 7, the words "second and third sessions" were replaced by the words "second session";

(b) A new operative paragraph was inserted after paragraph 7, reading:

"8. Notes with interest that the outcome of the third session of the World Youth Forum will be presented at the World Conference;"

and the subsequent paragraphs were renumbered accordingly;

(c) In operative paragraph 9 (former paragraph 8), the words "to include youth representatives in their delegations" were replaced by the words "to consider including youth representatives in their delegations".

17. At the 16th meeting, on 27 October, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Liberia, Mongolia, Panama, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Solomon Islands and Ukraine joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

18. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.13, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 25, draft resolution IV).

E. Draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.11 and Rev.1

19. At the 14th meeting, on 24 October, the representative of Mongolia, on behalf of Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Germany, Jordan, Madagascar, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, the Sudan and Turkey, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Education for all" (A/C.3/52/L.11). Subsequently, Belgium, Canada, France, Greece, Guinea, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Portugal and Spain joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[2] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] the right of every individual to education is recognized as inalienable,

"Recalling also its resolutions 45/104 of 7 December 1987, by which it proclaimed 1990 as International Literacy Year, and 44/127 of 15 December 1989, 46/93 of 16 December 1991 and 50/143 of 21 December 1995, in which it called for continuing international efforts to promote literacy,

"Recalling further its resolution 45/126 of 14 December 1990, in which it called for strengthening efforts towards the elimination of illiteracy of women of all ages,

"Mindful of the fact that eradication of illiteracy is one of the paramount objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade,[4]

"Deeply concerned about the persistence of the gender gap in education which is reflected by the fact that nearly two thirds of the world's adult illiterates are women,

"Convinced that literacy, especially functional literacy and adequate education, represents an indispensable element for the development and harnessing of science, technology and human resources for economic and social progress,

"Convinced also that, as emphasized in its resolution 49/184 entitled "United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education", human rights education should involve more than the provision of information and should constitute a comprehensive lifelong process by which people at all levels in development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies,

"Confident that the International Literacy Year and the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, resulted in increased awareness and support for literacy efforts and becoming a turning point in the struggle for a literate world,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 44/25, annex.

[4] Resolution 45/199, annex.

"Underlining the importance of sustaining and further promoting the progress achieved since the International Literacy Year and the Jomtien Conference,

"Welcoming the Amman Affirmation,[5] the final communiqué of the mid-decade meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, adopted at Amman in June 1996, which reaffirmed the necessity for and possibility of bringing the benefits of education for all,

"Recognizing that, despite the significant progress in basic education, especially the increase in primary school enrolment coupled with a growing emphasis on the quality of education, major problems, both emerging and continuing, still persist which require even more forceful and concerted action at national and international levels to achieve the goal of education for all,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization entitled 'Progress report on the implementation process of the education for all objectives';[6]

"2. Takes note with satisfaction of resolution 1997/7 on the realization of the right to education, including education in human rights, of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities;

"3. Reaffirms that basic education for all is an effective condition and means for achieving aims of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality, and ensuring democracy, peace and sustainable development;

"4. Acknowledges the efforts of the mid-decade review of progress towards achieving the goals of education for all in identifying both continuing and emerging challenges and stressing the need to meet those challenges and to accelerate the efforts to meet the basic needs of people of all age groups, particularly girls and women;

"5. Appeals to all Governments to step up their efforts to eradicate illiteracy and to direct education towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as emphasized by the proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004;

"6. Also appeals to all Governments to redouble their efforts to achieve their own goals of education for all by setting firm targets and timetables, where possible, including gender-specific education targets and programmes to combat the illiteracy of women and girls, and, by working in

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[5] A/52/183, annex.

[6] A/52/183.

active partnership with communities, associations, the media and development agencies, to reach those targets;

"7. Invites Member States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to further intensify their efforts to effectively implement the World Declaration on Education for All,[7] and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000,[8] as well as the relevant commitments and recommendations to promote literacy contained, inter alia, in the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s,[9] of the World Summit for Children, and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[10] the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development[11] and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[12] the Beijing Declaration[13] and Platform for Action,[14] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Delhi Declaration of

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[7] Final Report of the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990, Inter-Agency Commission (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank) for the World Conference on Education for All, New York, 1990, appendix I.

[8] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Records of the General Conference, Twenty-fifth Session, Paris, 17 October to 16 November 1989, vol. 1, Resolutions.

[9] See A/45/625.

[10] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[11] Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[12] Ibid., annex II.

[13] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[14] Ibid., annex II.

the Education for All Summit of Nine High-Population Developing Countries,[15] the Amman Affirmation,[16] and the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning and the Agenda for the Future of Adult Learning, with a view to better coordinating their activities and increasing their contribution to development,

"8. Recommends that all Member States, and relevant organizations of the United Nations, as well as non-governmental organizations, provide the necessary information on the implementation of the strategies of education for all to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization so as to enable them to report on the overall progress achieved and the shortfalls encountered in attaining the goal of education for all;

"9. Requests the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and in consultation with Member States, to consider effective ways and means for achieving the goal of education for all, including the desirability and the feasibility of launching a United Nations decade to eradicate illiteracy, and to report thereupon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council;

"10. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the question of cooperation towards education for all under the item on social development."

20. At the same meeting, the representative of Mongolia orally revised the draft resolution by adding a new operative paragraph after paragraph 6, reading:

"Appeals anew to Governments and to economic and financial organizations and institutions, both national and international, to lend greater financial and material support to the efforts to increase literacy and achieve education for all".

21. At the 24th meeting, on 3 November, the representative of Mongolia, on behalf of Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Spain, the Sudan, Thailand and Turkey introduced a revised draft resolution entitled "Education for all" (A/C.3/52/L.11/Rev.1).

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[15] Report of the Director-General on the Education for All Summit of Nine High-Population Developing Countries, New Delhi, 13-16 December 1993, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Executive Board, document 144 EX/30, annex.

[16] A/52/183, annex.

22. Subsequently, Cuba, Denmark, India, Mauritania, the Republic of Korea and Venezuela joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution.

23. At the 28th meeting, on 6 November, Barbados, Bolivia, Colombia, Finland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, the United States of America and Viet Nam joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution.

24. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted revised draft resolution A/C.3/52/L.11/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 25, draft resolution V).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

25. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

International Year of Older Persons: towards a society for all ages

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/5 of 16 October 1992, in which it decided to observe the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons,

Also recalling its resolution 40/30 of 29 November 1985, in which it expressed its conviction that older persons must be considered an important and necessary element in the development process at all levels within a given society,

Mindful of the need to promote adherence to the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, as adopted in its resolution 46/91 of 16 December 1991,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/22 of 27 July 1993, in which the Council invited Member States to strengthen their national mechanisms on ageing, inter alia, to enable them to serve as national focal points for the preparations for and observance of the Year,

Further recalling the relevant provisions of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[17] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and

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[17] Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Development[10] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights,[11] as well as of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[12] and the Habitat Agenda,[13]

Keeping in mind that the ageing of societies in the twentieth century, unprecedented in the history of humankind, is a major challenge for all societies and requires a fundamental change in the way in which societies organize themselves and view older persons,

1. Encourages all States, the United Nations system and all other actors, in reaching out for a future society for all ages, to take advantage of the International Year of Older Persons so as to increase awareness of the challenge of the demographic ageing of societies, the individual and social needs of older persons, the contribution of older persons to societies and the need for a change in attitudes towards older persons;

2. Welcomes the activities undertaken by States, United Nations organizations and bodies and non-governmental organizations in preparation for the observance of the Year and encourages them to continue their efforts;

3. Invites States to take account of the increasing number and percentage of older persons in need of help;

4. Also invites States to develop comprehensive strategies at the national, regional and local levels to meet the increase in demand for care and support for older persons as individuals, within their families and communities, and within institutions, bearing in mind the changing socio-economic, technological and cultural environment;

5. Encourages States, with the support of United Nations organizations, bodies and programmes and non-governmental organizations to formulate policies and programmes on ageing with a view to offering older persons opportunities to utilize their experience and knowledge to promote a society for all ages based on solidarity between generations, so that they can contribute to and benefit from full participation in society;

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[10] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[11] Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

[12] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[13] Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996 (A/CONF.165/14), chap. I, annex II.

6. Further encourages States to establish a national focal point and formulate national programmes for the Year, bearing in mind the conceptual framework referred to in General Assembly resolution 50/141 of 21 December 1995;

7. Calls upon States to include a gender dimension in their national programmes for the Year;

8. Encourages States to consider establishing ad hoc, broad-based national coordinating mechanisms for the Year in order to enhance, inter alia, collaboration with representatives of civil society;

9. Invites States to consider convening high-level and other meetings at the regional level to discuss the theme 'A society for all ages';

10. Invites non-governmental organizations, including those specialized in the question of older persons, to develop programmes and projects for the Year, particularly at the local level, in cooperation, inter alia, with local authorities, community leaders, enterprises, the media and schools, and encourages them to support and participate in the appropriate national coordinating mechanisms;

11. Encourages relevant United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to support local, national and international programmes and projects for the Year and also encourages them, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, as well as international financial institutions, to ensure that the concerns and contributions of older persons are integrated into their development programmes;

12. Emphasizes that activities for the Year should be initiated primarily at the national level;

13. Invites national and international development agencies, bodies and international financial institutions to explore feasible approaches to improving the access of older persons to credit training and appropriate technologies for income generation, and the participation of older persons in family enterprises, community enterprises and microenterprises;

14. Welcomes contributions by the Commission on the Status of Women on the topic of older women in relation to the Year;

15. Encourages the Secretary-General to allocate sufficient resources for promoting and coordinating activities for the Year, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 47/5, in which it was decided that observance of the Year would be supported from resources of the regular budget for the biennium 1998-1999 and from voluntary contributions;

16. Invites States to consider actively supporting the United Nations Secretariat in the preparation and implementation of the projects for the Year, inter alia, through voluntary financial or personnel contributions;

17. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Operational framework for the International Year of Older Persons, 1999";[22]

18. Welcomes the initiative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the American Association of Retired Persons to collaborate on a Worldwide Poster Competition for the Year, in which artists will portray their vision of "A Society for All Ages";

19. Welcomes the continuing efforts of the Secretariat to promote information exchange for 1999 and beyond, inter alia, through regular publication of the Bulletin on Ageing, and invites the agencies, bodies and programmes of the United Nations system to consider placing special emphasis on the theme "A society for all ages" in their publications, including the Human Development Report;

20. Invites the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat to consider producing a logo and press kit as well as an exhibit for the Year and invites the United Nations Postal Administration to consider producing stamps on the theme "A society for all ages";

21. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the system-wide implementation of the present resolution;

22. Also requests the Secretary-General to officially launch the International Year for Older Persons in 1998, on the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons;

23. Decides to devote four plenary meetings at its fifty-fourth session to the follow-up to the Year, which should take place at an appropriate global policy-making level.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Follow-up to the International Year of the Family

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/82 of 8 December 1989, 46/92 of 16 December 1991, 47/237 of 20 December 1993 and 50/142 of 21 December 1995, concerning the proclamation, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family,

Recognizing that the basic objective of the follow-up to the International Year of the Family should be to strengthen and support families in performing their societal and developmental functions and to build upon their strengths, particularly at the national and local levels,

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[22] A/52/328.

Noting that the family-related provisions of the outcomes of the world conferences of the 1990s provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Emphasizing that equality between women and men and respect for the rights of all family members is essential to family well-being and society at large,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of the Family[23] and welcomes the proposals contained therein;

2. Invites Governments to continue their actions to build family-friendly societies, inter alia, by promoting the rights of individual family members, in particular gender equality and the rights of the child;

3. Emphasizes the need for a more focused and coordinated approach towards family issues within the United Nations system;

4. Calls upon Governments, non-governmental organizations, other organizations of civil society, the private sector and individuals to contribute generously to the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities;

5. Urges Governments to take sustained action at all levels concerning families, including studies and applied research on families, and to promote the role of families in development and invites Governments to develop concrete measures and approaches to address national priorities to deal with family issues;

6. Recommends that all relevant actors in civil society, including research and academic institutions, contribute to and participate in actions on families;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to play an active role in facilitating international cooperation within the framework of the follow-up to the International Year of the Family, to facilitate the exchange of experiences and information among Governments on effective policies and strategies, to facilitate technical assistance, with a focus on least developed and developing countries, and to encourage the organization of subregional and interregional meetings and relevant research;

8. Calls upon Governments to encourage the active follow-up to the International Year of the Family at the national and local levels;

9. Reaffirms Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/7, in which the Council decided that the follow-up to the International Year of the Family should be an integral part of the multi-year work programme of the Commission for Social Development.

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[23] A/52/57-E/1997/4.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: towards a society for all in the twenty-first century

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 37/52 of 3 December 1982, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons,[24] 49/153 of 23 December 1994, and 50/144 of 21 December 1995, in which it called upon Governments, when implementing the World Programme of Action, to take into account the elements suggested in the Long-term Strategy to Implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond,[25]

Recalling also its resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993, by which it adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,

Welcoming the inclusion of measures to address questions of disability in the programmes, plans and platforms for action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II),

Mindful of the need to adopt and implement effective public policies and programmes to promote the rights of persons with disabilities,

Convinced that the end of the century provides an opportunity for considering what issues to address in order to fully implement the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,

Welcoming initiatives to hold international conferences related to disabled persons, particularly the holding of the Fifth World Assembly of Disabled People's International at Mexico City in December 1998, on the theme "Towards an inclusive twenty-first century",

Recognizing the importance of timely and reliable data on disability for disability-sensitive policies, programme planning and evaluation, and the need for further development of practical statistical methodology for data collection and compilation on populations with disabilities,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the third review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons,[26] and welcomes the conclusions and recommendations contained therein;

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[24] A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV).

[25] A/49/435, annex.

[26] A/52/351.

2. Takes note of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1997/19 of 21 July 1997 on equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities and 1997/20 of 21 July 1997 on children with disabilities;

3. Notes with appreciation the valuable work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, and welcomes the second round of monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the cooperation of the Special Rapporteur with the Commission on Human Rights and especially with the Committee on the Rights of the Child;

4. Encourages Governments and the non-governmental community to examine key social and economic policy issues related to the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, in particular: (a) accessibility, (b) social services and social safety nets, and (c) employment and sustainable livelihoods;

5. Urges Governments to cooperate with the United Nations Statistics Division in the continued development of global statistics and indicators, and encourages them to avail themselves of the technical assistance of the Division, as needed;

6. Urges relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including relevant treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the regional commissions, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions, to work closely with the United Nations programme on disabled persons in the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities by sharing experiences and findings on disability issues;

7. Decides that the next quinquennial review of the World Programme of Action, in 2002, shall consider the issues mentioned in paragraph 4 of the present resolution;

8. Invites Governments, concerned non-governmental organizations and the private sector to continue to support the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability with a view to providing additional support to the implementation of the Standard Rules, including further assistance in national capacity-building and support for the work of the Special Rapporteur on Disability;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to develop a plan to increase the accessibility of the United Nations and its offices and meetings to persons with disabilities;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-seventh session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IV

Policies and programmes involving youth

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/81 of 14 December 1995, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,

Recalling also its resolutions 49/152 and 49/154 of 23 December 1994,

Reaffirming the importance of involving youth and youth organizations in all matters of concern to them,

Welcoming the report of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations system on its second session, convened by the United Nations, in partnership with the Austrian Federal Youth Council, and held at Vienna from 25 to 29 November 1996,

Noting that the third session of the World Youth Forum, convened by the United Nations, in partnership with the Portuguese National Youth Council, will be held at Braga, Portugal, from 2 to 6 August 1998,

Reiterating the call, in paragraph 112 of the Programme of Action, to all States that have not already done so to formulate and adopt an integrated national youth policy, in consultation with youth and youth-related organizations,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;[27]

2. Calls upon all Member States to undertake all possible efforts to implement the World Programme of Action;

3. Stresses again the importance of the active and direct participation of youth and youth organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels in promoting and implementing the Programme of Action and in evaluating the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in its implementation, and of the need to support the activities of youth mechanisms that have been set up by youth and youth organizations;

4. Welcomes the initiative of the Government of Portugal to host a World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, to be held at Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998, and takes note with appreciation of the ongoing collaboration between the Government of Portugal and the United Nations, including its agencies, funds and programmes, in that regard;

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[27] A/52/60-E/1997/6.

5. Stresses the need to involve youth and youth organizations in all stages of preparation for the World Conference, at the local, national, regional and international levels, and welcomes initiatives taken in that respect;

6. Acknowledges the activities undertaken at the regional level in preparation for the World Conference;

7. Recommends that the results of the World Youth Forum at its second session be duly taken into account at the World Conference;

8. Notes with interest that the outcome of the third session of the World Youth Forum will be presented at the World Conference;

9. Reiterates the call made in the Programme of Action to Member States to consider including youth representatives in their delegations to the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations meetings, thus broadening the channels of communication and enhancing the discussion of youth-related issues, and requests the Secretary-General to convey this invitation to Member States;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to make the reports of the World Youth Forum at its third session and of the World Conference available to all Member States;

11. Further requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution and, in particular, on progress made in the implementation of the World Programme of Action.

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

Education for all

The General Assembly,

Recalling that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[28] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[29] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child[30] the right of every individual to education is recognized as inalienable,

Recalling also its resolutions 45/104 of 7 December 1987, by which it proclaimed 1990 as International Literacy Year, and 44/127 of 15 December 1989, 46/93 of 16 December 1991 and 50/143 of 21 December 1995, in which it called for continuing international efforts to promote literacy,

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[28] Resolution 217 A (III).

[29] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[30] Resolution 44/25, annex.

Recalling further its resolution 45/126 of 14 December 1990, in which it called for strengthening efforts towards the elimination of illiteracy of women of all ages,

Mindful of the fact that eradication of illiteracy is one of the paramount objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade,[31]

Deeply concerned about the persistence of the gender gap in education which is reflected by the fact that nearly two thirds of the world's adult illiterates are women,

Convinced that literacy, especially functional literacy and adequate education, represents an indispensable element for the development and harnessing of science, technology and human resources for economic and social progress,

Recalling its resolution 49/184 of 23 December 1994, entitled "United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education", and taking note with satisfaction of resolution 1997/7 of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Commission on Human Rights on the realization of the right to education, including education in human rights,

Confident that the International Literacy Year and the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, resulted in increased awareness and support for literacy efforts and becoming a turning point in the struggle for a literate world,

Underlining the importance of sustaining and further promoting the progress achieved since the International Literacy Year and the Jomtien Conference,

Welcoming the Amman Affirmation,[32] the final communiqué of the mid-decade meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, adopted at Amman in June 1996, which reaffirmed the necessity for and possibility of bringing the benefits of education for all,

Recognizing that, despite the significant progress in basic education, especially the increase in primary school enrolment coupled with a growing emphasis on the quality of education, major problems, both emerging and continuing, still persist which require even more forceful and concerted action at the national and international levels to achieve the goal of education for all,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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[31] Resolution 45/199, annex.

[32] A/52/183, annex.

entitled "Progress report on the implementation process of the education for all objectives";[33]

2. Reaffirms that basic education for all is essential for achieving the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality, and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy;

3. Acknowledges the efforts of the mid-decade review of progress towards achieving the goals of education for all in identifying both continuing and emerging challenges and stressing the need to meet those challenges and to accelerate the efforts to meet the basic needs of people of all age groups, particularly girls and women;

4. Appeals to all Governments to step up their efforts to eradicate illiteracy and to direct education towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

5. Also appeals to all Governments to redouble their efforts to achieve their own goals of education for all by setting firm targets and timetables, where possible, including gender-specific education targets and programmes to combat the illiteracy of women and girls, and, by working in active partnership with communities, associations, the media and development agencies, to reach those targets;

6. Appeals anew to Governments and to economic and financial organizations and institutions, both national and international, to lend greater financial and material support to the efforts to increase literacy and achieve education for all;

7. Invites Member States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to further intensify their efforts to effectively implement the World Declaration on Education for All,[34] the Amman Affirmation,[32] and the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning and the Agenda for the Future of Adult Learning adopted at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, held at Hamburg, Germany, from 14 to 18 July 1997, as well as the relevant commitments and recommendations to promote literacy contained in the recent major United Nations-sponsored international conferences, with a view to better coordinating their activities and increasing their contribution to development;

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[33] A/52/183.

[34] Final Report of the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990, Inter-Agency Commission (the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, World Bank) for the World Conference on Education for All, New York, 1990, appendix I.

8. Recommends that all Member States and relevant organizations of the United Nations, as well as non-governmental organizations, provide the necessary information on the implementation of the strategies of education for all to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization so as to enable them to report on the overall progress achieved and the shortfalls encountered in attaining the goal of education for all;

9. Requests the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and in consultation with Member States, to consider effective ways and means for achieving the goal of education for all, including the desirability and the feasibility of launching a United Nations decade to eradicate illiteracy, and to report thereupon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council;

10. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the question of cooperation towards education for all under the item on social development.